



CITY OF ROSWELL

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NEWS RELEASE

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Planetarium reopens, plans new programming

Spring-break event offered for children in grades one through seven

Roswell, N.M. — The Robert H. Goddard Planetarium at the Roswell Museum and Art Center has reopened and is rebuilding the programming, led by a new planetarium coordinator. Parents and children can get reintroduced to the exploration and education the planetarium offers by signing up for a program that will take place next week during local schools' spring break.

"A Star-studded Spring Break" takes place Tuesday and Wednesday, March 29-30, from 9 to 11 a.m. Tuesday and 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday. The free two-day workshop features a planetarium program and a hands-on art experience. Students in first through seventh grades will learn about



constellations in the night sky, zodiac charts, and make their own collaged star chart creations. Parents can sign up their children by calling the planetarium at 624-6744 ext. 23.

The planetarium was closed last May after the coordinator, who was a Roswell Independent School District employee, was no longer able to fill the position. The school district employee had managed the planetarium under an

agreement between the district and city, which allowed local schools to regularly use the facility for student field trips and classes.

School-group programs are continuing under new Planetarium Coordinator Jeremy Howe, who was hired as a city employee. The programs often involve both a planetarium presentation and viewing of the art collections at the museum. Programs can be customized to individual groups as well. The programs are free to local school groups from Roswell, Dexter and Hagerman. Other groups from out of town are charged \$1 per person. To arrange a planetarium program, call (575) 624-6744 ext. 23. To set up a museum tour, dial ext. 12.

Howe has a bachelor's degree in geology from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. He has worked as a geologist for an oil and gas exploration company, as well as a mining firm. His

knowledge of geology crosses over into the field of astronomy as it relates to the physical makeup of objects such as planets, comets and meteorites.

“We are very excited that this respected and unique facility has reopened with a wonderful gentleman, Jeremy Howe, at its helm,” said Museum Interim Executive Director Laurie Rufe. “Bill Siders, a volunteer docent and board member with the museum has also played a major role in getting the planetarium back on its feet.”

Howe and the museum staff are currently reorganizing the planetarium space, developing a public show schedule, and creating summer space camp offerings for children.

While the planetarium is now being fully operated by the City of Roswell, an important partnership continues with the Roswell Independent School District. The school district owns the equipment and provides for its maintenance.

In addition, Rufe explained, “an anonymous donor, one who has been instrumental in supporting the Roswell Museum and Art Center for decades, has stepped in with a two-year commitment to help fund the planetarium coordinator's position. I cannot say enough about this outpouring of support for our Robert Goddard Planetarium.”

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